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A field office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture

Weekly Crop & Weather Roundup

For The Week Ending September 21, 2003

Good week for Field Work: There were 4 days suitable for field work. Soil moisture was rated as 61 percent adequate and 39 percent surplus. Principal farm activities included making hay; harvesting corn silage; spreading manure, lime and fertilizer; caring for livestock; harvesting, processing and canning/freezing fruit and vegetables; and cutting firewood.

Crops: Some farmers reported damage to their corn crop due to hurricane Isabel. The corn crop condition was rated as 6 percent very poor, 9 percent poor, 18 percent fair, 46 percent good and 21 percent excellent, a slight decline as compared to last week. Eighty-eight percent of corn has reached the dough stage, 60 percent has reached the dent stage and 20 percent has reached the mature stage. As has been observed all season, overall corn development is 10-20 percent behind 2002 and the five-year average. The percent of corn harvested for silage reached 36 percent, 45 and 20 percent behind 2002 and the five-year average. The condition of the soybean crop was rated as 2 percent very poor, 4 percent poor, 15 percent fair, 63 percent good and 16 percent excellent. In terms of fall plowing and planting winter crops, 18 percent of fall plowing has been completed, about 18 percent behind last year and the five-year average. Ten percent of winter wheat has been planted, on pace with 2002 and the five-year average. Barley planted advanced to 20 percent complete, slightly behind last year and the five-year average. Not surprisingly, quality of hay declined; 15 percent was rated as very poor, 14 percent was poor, 39 percent was fair, 25 percent was good and 7 percent was excellent. The third cutting of alfalfa reached 90 percent complete, on pace with last year and the five-year average. The fourth cutting advanced to 37 percent complete, about 20 percent behind 2002 and the five-year average. The second cutting of timothy clover reached 83 percent complete, up only one percent from last week. The tobacco harvest continued its rapid advance, reaching 88 percent complete.

Livestock: Pasture conditions across Pennsylvania deteriorated slightly over the past week. Three percent of pasture land was rated very poor, 7 percent was rated poor, 28 percent was rated fair, 47 percent was rated good and 15 percent was rated excellent.

Fruit & Vegetable: Despite losing a few days to hurricane Isabel, fruit harvest continued to move forward. The percent of apples harvested advanced to 43 percent, on pace with 2002 and the five-year average. The apple crop condition was rated

as 10 percent fair, 75 percent good and 15 percent excellent, a slight improvement over last week. The percent of grapes harvested varied widely across the commonwealth. Overall, grape harvest advanced to 11 percent complete, about 10 percent below both 2002 and the five-year average. The potato harvest advanced to 55 percent complete, on pace with last year and the five-year average.

U.S. As of September 14, 2003: Highlights: Above-normal temperatures prevailed throughout the Corn Belt, with moderate to heavy rainfall in the western half and little or no rain in the eastern half. Most of the Great Plains had moderate rainfall, with above-normal temperatures in the north and mostly below-normal temperatures in the remainder of the region. In the Pacific Northwest and Rocky Mountains, cooler, wetter weather brought drought relief. The Southwest experienced warm, dry weather, but scattered thunderstorms caused local flash flooding. Temperatures were near normal in the Mississippi Delta, with the western half receiving moderate rainfall. The Southeast was mostly dry, with below-average temperatures. Moderate rainfall combined with below-normal temperatures in the middle Atlantic Coast States. The Northeast was mostly dry, with near-normal temperatures. Corn: Eighty-eight percent of the acreage was at or beyond the dent stage, 1 percentage point behind last year's 89 percent and 3 points behind the 5-year average of 91 percent. Forty percent of the crop was mature, 3 points behind last year at this time and 9 points behind the 5-year average. Seven percent of the crop had been harvested, compared with 9 percent for last year and the 5-year average. The crop has been slow to dent and mature in the Ohio Valley, where most States were 1 week or more behind the average in both progress stages. Maturing was also well behind the average in most of the Corn Belt. Most of the Great Plains States were ahead of normal in denting and maturity. Harvest had begun in almost all States, but trailed behind the average pace in the Corn Belt, while the Great Plains was ahead of normal. Soybeans: Thirty-five percent of the crop was dropping leaves, 4 percentage points behind last year and 6 points behind the 5-year average. The northern Great Plains remained ahead of the normal pace, while the central Great Plains lagged behind; progress in the Corn Belt varied. Crop condition decreased slightly. Winter Wheat: Sixteen percent of next year's crop had been planted, on pace with last year, but 2 percentage points ahead of the 5-year average. Moderate rainfall throughout most of the major-producing areas slowed field work.

Weather Data For Week Ending September 21, 2003

STATION	LAST WEEK WEATHER SUMMARY						April 1, 03 - September 21, 03					GDD
	TEMPERATURE				PRECIPITATION		PRECIPITATION			GDD BASE 50F	BASE 40F	
	HI	LO	AVG	DFN	TOTAL	DAYS	TOTAL	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL	DFN	TOT
NORTHWEST												
Erie	79	48	65	+2	1.57	4	19.20	-2.21	73	2404	+34	3965
Franklin_AG	80	47	62	+2	1.65	6	30.63	+6.94	111	2162	-44	3769
Meadville	79	46	62	+2	1.98	4	28.03	+4.43	93	2177	+155	3772
Mercer	77	37	59	-3	2.02	4	34.12	+11.55	82	1839	-346	3421
Springboro	77	41	61	-2	1.73	4	25.53	+4.64	82	2036	-302	3592
Warren	77	48	62	+2	1.11	4	31.53	+7.77	87	2151	+13	3727
NORTH CENTRAL												
Bradford_Region	73	36	58	+2	1.59	4	28.95	+5.19	97	1671	+117	3202
Emporium	78	47	63	+6	1.56	4	32.24	+8.68	92	2201	+443	3811
Kane	71	32	54	-3	1.26	4	27.04	+2.88	80	1199	-324	2637
Laporte	75	46	61	+1	1.05	3	30.85	+8.98	88	1924	-264	3455
Lock_Haven	80	48	65	+4	2.06	4	26.86	+5.32	83	2526	+204	4157
Port_Allegany	76	44	61	+4	1.20	3	30.83	+8.38	83	1846	+133	3378
Renovo	79	47	64	+3	1.74	3	26.40	+4.86	91	2392	+70	4018
Ridgway	76	43	60	+2	1.34	3	26.21	+2.65	79	1841	+83	3413
Stevenson_Dam	78	49	64	+6	1.56	4	27.92	+4.36	96	2204	+446	3812
Towanda	83	50	65	+5	0.31	4	28.34	+10.14	101	2200	-4	3775
Wellsboro	75	43	60	+4	1.44	3	27.21	+8.94	83	1838	+183	3370
Williamsport_AP	77	50	66	+4	1.47	5	29.08	+7.90	85	2617	+58	4248
NORTHEAST												
Hawley	81	46	64	+6	2.17	4	26.29	+5.61	74	1972	+80	3546
Wilkes-Barre/Sc	81	47	66	+5	1.21	4	28.55	+8.48	78	2498	+70	4102
Susquehanna	82	49	66	+9	1.50	4	30.82	+8.79	76	2414	+619	3996
WEST CENTRAL												
Butler	81	44	61	-2	1.65	3	27.83	+5.40	89	2304	+17	3943
New_Castle	82	46	63	+2	1.81	4	33.44	+12.97	80	2492	+203	4138
Slippery_Rock	80	46	62	+3	2.14	4	35.12	+13.27	88	2373	+315	4011
CENTRAL												
Altoona/Blair_C	78	46	63	+2	2.44	4	24.73	+5.25	100	2387	-45	3998
Du_Bois	74	45	61	+1	0.94	5	29.91	+7.36	105	2066	-41	3655
Lewistown	81	50	66	+3	2.56	3	27.23	+6.31	78	2690	+20	4331
Middletown	80	55	68	+3	1.49	4	29.69	+8.92	93	2955	-56	4601
Prince_Gallitzi	77	43	60	+1	1.86	5	26.92	+1.83	97	2168	+208	3751
Selinsgrove	79	50	66	+4	1.38	4	26.21	+4.51	85	2540	+43	4165
State_College_P	76	49	63	+2	2.95	4	32.17	+12.49	90	2474	+73	4098
EAST CENTRAL												
Allentown-Bethl	84	51	69	+6	4.50	4	30.44	+7.68	82	2814	+61	4442
Lehighnton	81	49	65	+3	3.97	5	34.06	+11.48	96	2420	-236	4027
Matamoras	81	51	67	+6	1.57	4	26.47	+3.63	82	2143	-259	3714
Tobyhanna	81	44	63	+7	4.45	4	38.76	+14.47	89	2607	+962	4215
SOUTHWEST												
Pittsburgh/Alle	82	48	63	+1	1.57	3	23.35	+2.59	94	2777	+330	4449
Derry	79	48	63	+2	1.93	3	32.97	+11.31	84	2462	+151	4087
Meyersdale	76	42	59	-4	3.76	3	28.97	+5.37	92	1859	-419	3424
Mount_Pleasant	83	45	62	+2	2.07	3	29.81	+5.16	93	2404	+337	4048
Pittsburgh_Intl	82	48	64	+0	1.55	5	23.46	+3.92	85	2728	+167	4395
Rector	83	45	62	+2	1.94	3	28.28	+3.63	84	2435	+368	4072
Waynesburg	84	47	63	+1	1.15	3	34.64	+13.27	93	2529	+154	4188
SOUTH CENTRAL												
Biglerville	80	52	67	+2	2.67	4	32.07	+12.54	100	2761	-181	4405
Everett	78	40	62	-1	2.06	4	27.16	+8.24	93	2434	+9	4063
Hanover	78	49	66	+2	2.40	4	32.03	+12.50	79	2774	-168	4416
Shippensburg	84	50	66	+2	2.24	3	27.45	+8.38	78	2908	-16	4559
South_Mountain	76	48	63	+1	2.51	4	33.40	+13.92	84	2220	-205	3808
York_AP	82	48	68	+3	1.79	4	25.77	+4.81	88	2818	-111	4460
SOUTHEAST												
Green_Lane	86	51	69	+6	5.23	3	36.22	+14.17	82	2974	+340	4618
Hamburg	81	53	67	+7	3.79	5	30.83	+5.49	87	2725	+318	4353
Hopewell	82	50	67	+1	4.45	4	31.64	+8.56	84	2668	-425	4280
Lancaster_AP	81	51	68	+4	1.90	3	24.24	+2.06	81	2818	+34	4455
Neshaminy_Falls	85	59	72	+9	2.38	4	25.87	+0.31	78	3033	+282	4666
New_Holland	83	53	68	+4	4.08	3	32.39	+10.21	85	2800	+16	4431
Philadelphia	83	59	72	+6	1.91	3	23.43	+1.76	74	3419	+225	5084
Philadelphia_NE	83	57	72	+5	2.53	4	23.90	+2.23	82	3133	-61	4780
Reading_AP	83	51	68	+5	2.85	4	25.29	+1.58	82	2899	+163	4531
Valley_Forge_Na	85	51	70	+4	3.44	4	31.40	+8.32	84	2769	-324	4390
Willow_Grove	82	55	70	+7	1.28	3	22.00	-3.56	73	2911	+160	4543

DFN = Departure From Normal (Using 1961-90 Normals Period).
Precipitation (Rainfall or melted snow/ice) and Pan Evap in inches.
Precipitation Days = Days with precip of .01 inch or more.
Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit.

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INTERNET REPORTERS' COMMENTS, By County:

*Reporters are from Extension Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service,
Farm Service Agency, farmers, commodity specialists, or other knowledgeable individuals.*

"Overall it was a very good work week. NRCS was involved in quite a few construction projects this week because of the good weather. Hurricane Isabel only delivered 1 3/4 inches of rain on Friday, which did not cause any problems."

- Ron McCorkle, Crawford County

"There was rain at the beginning of the week and at the end. Farmers could certainly use some dry days to harvest corn silage, soybeans, corn, potatoes, and grapes."

- Lew Steckler, Erie County

"Rain from Isabel was less than predicted, although we had rain all day on Friday. Winds knocked trees down around the county causing power problems. It was nice at the beginning of the week allowing for hay to be made, but now the ground is so wet there will be another delay."

- Sherri Butters, Tioga County

"The beginning of the week was good for field work. Then the rains came. My gauge had 2 inches."

- Dick Decker, Centre County

"We got lucky from the storm this week. We only received about 3 inches of rain, but we did get a lot of wind. The wind knocked down a lot of the corn around here, so it will be even harder to get any corn."

- M. K., Huntington County

"Most of the county received about 2 inches of rainfall from the storms earlier and again late in the week. No damage from the tropical storm, just some moderate rain. Still very little corn silage harvested as we wait for our late-planted corn crop to mature. Temperatures remain at or above normal which should be helping with crop maturity."

- John Lohr, Westmoreland County

"This week was spent in preparation for the hurricane. Corn was cut for silage day and night. Most areas came through without significant damage, however, the more mature corn was twisted about, and areas were without electricity for various durations. No injuries or major property damage. Rainfall was about 2 inches. Too early to determine apple losses because fruit did not drop, but there could have been heavy bruising due to the wind whipping. That will show up later."

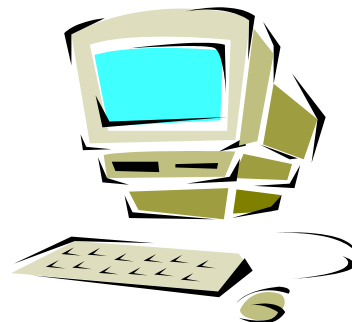
- Thomas A. Kerr, Franklin County

"While the corn crop had great potential, who knows what can be harvested after the hurricane damage. This harvest will try everyone's patience, and equipment to salvage what was a beautiful crop."

- Randy Ranck, Lancaster County

"Despite wet weather and extremely wet soils, many growers were able to harvest tobacco and corn silage during the week in anticipation of the hurricane. When the hurricane hit on Thursday evening and night it was devastating to late planted corn and the tobacco still in the field. Corn that was planted late, due to wet weather in May, has been struggling ever since to make up. This corn was not going to mature past the silage stage at best and is now mostly laying on the ground. It will present a challenge to harvest as anything now."

- Bob Anderson, Lancaster County



PA Crop Progress for Week Ending September 21, 2003

Crop	Current Week	Last Year	5-Year Average
	Percent		
Fall plowing	18	37	34
Corn, dough	88	95	95
Corn, dent	60	88	79
Corn, mature	20	49	33
Corn silage, harvested	36	81	56
Barley, planted	20	27	24
Winter wheat, planted	10	15	10
Tobacco, harvested	88	95	91
Potatoes, harvested	55	57	53
Alfalfa, 3 rd cutting	90	94	88
Alfalfa, 4 th cutting	37	56	54
Timothy clover, 2 nd cutting	83	89	90
Apples, harvested	43	42	39
Grapes, harvested	11	20	22

PA Crop Condition for Week Ending September 21, 2003

Crop	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
	Percent				
Corn	6	9	18	46	21
Soybeans	2	4	15	63	16
Quality of hay made	15	14	39	25	7
Pasture conditions	3	7	28	47	15
Apples	0	0	10	75	15

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